

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 10 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RESPONSIBLE DEPLOYMENT FROM IRAQ ACT

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today we take another step in ending the war in Iraq as we consider the measure to withdraw our troops by next April.

Each day, support for President Bush's war crumbles as evidence mounts of the cost of this debacle: \$10 billion a month, more lives lost, and thousands of hopes and dreams shattered.

We who opposed this war from the start for the reasons played out every day on the front pages of our newspapers understand that the redeployment of 200,000 American soldiers and contractors in Iraq will take some time to implement, but that is no excuse not to start now as rapidly and responsibly as possible to get our people out of the crossfire of this religious civil war. They have done all that they can, all that we should expect of them.

I call on the doubters in Congress to stop enabling the President; instead, to join us in supporting the strongest, most direct measure possible, not just to send the President a message, but to rein him in and bring our soldiers home from this nightmare.

THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in the past weeks terrorists with possible al Qaeda ties have attempted car bombings in London. Following these failed attempts, terrorists struck the Glasgow, Scotland airport. This attack by two doctors in a flaming Jeep Cherokee, doctors who have been sworn to protect life, were arrested for attempting mass murder by incineration of innocent civilians.

In addition, terrorists held children captive in a mosque in Islamabad, Pakistan; and an al Qaeda homicide bomber in Yemen murdered seven Spanish tourists and two Yemeni guides while they were visiting a temple of the ancient Queen of Sheba.

Recent events such as this should alert Americans that the global war on terrorism is a worldwide threat and that Iraq and Afghanistan remain the central front of the battle as claimed by bin Laden's spokesman Zawahiri.

Instead of practicing party politics, Congress should rely on the leadership of our military leaders such as General

David Petraeus. By stopping terrorists overseas, our troops are protecting America's families at home.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th.

REBUILDING A NEW VA HOSPITAL IN NEW ORLEANS

(Mr. JEFFERSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank Chairman BOB FILNER and members on his House Committee on Veterans' Affairs for holding a field hearing in New Orleans on this past Monday on the subject of rebuilding a new VA hospital in the greater New Orleans area.

The VA has narrowed its search for the location of a new VA hospital to a downtown New Orleans site and to a site in the adjoining Jefferson Parish. For reasons of taking advantage of the synergies of the relationship of Tulane and LSU medical schools to the new VA hospital and because of the savings and long-term operational costs that can be realized, I and several of the panelists recommended the New Orleans site as most beneficial to the care of our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, in the end it is important that we put our veterans first. When we have called on them to serve our country, they have not asked us to wait. They have responded to our Nation's call to duty at great risk to themselves and to their families. Nearly 2 years after Hurricane Katrina struck, we have already asked them to wait far too long. It is now time to build a world-class, state-of-the-art VA hospital in downtown New Orleans and to do so in the shortest possible time. We call on the Veterans Administration to do just that.

GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today we will see another attempt by the liberal majority leadership to drive a stake between the American people and the brave men and women fighting in the global war on terror. Today's latest attempt is called a precipitous withdrawal. The American people would label it a cut and run. Our soldiers deserve the confidence of their leaders, not second-guessing arrogance by politicians half a world away.

The leadership thinks Iraq is lost, despite the fact that the new mission has shown signs of progress, including the fact that half of Baghdad has been secured, the Baghdad Security Plan. General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker are going to provide us a progress report in September, but that is not fast enough for the liberal leadership. They expected the new strategy to win over-

night. Don't they know that you don't find instant gratification in war?

One thing is certain: surrender and failure in securing Iraq hold catastrophic consequences for freedom, the U.S., and the Iraqi people. Surrender would send the wrong message. It will say the U.S. is weak, that roving death squads in the streets of Baghdad and ethnic cleansing are acceptable to us. It may be fashionable to want to pull out of Iraq, but it sends the wrong message.

WE OWE AN EXPLANATION TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. SESTAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SESTAK. I can be and am disappointed in this bill we will vote on today, intended to reduce U.S. troops in Iraq. It aims to begin the reduction, but leaves an unspecified limited presence of troops in Iraq by a deadline of April 1, 2008, a level of troops and their missions to be determined by President Bush.

It does no harm, but how much good? One might say it is a step in the right direction even with such significant limitations, but I have concern. Congress is, as it should be, close to ending this tragic misadventure; however, ending this war is necessary but insufficient. How we end it and by what means is of even greater importance for our troops' safety and our own security. A Congress intent upon mandating such a new security policy through force of law owes a careful explanation to the country why and how it is to be done, including dealing with what would occur in the aftermath. We don't do that here.

I will vote for this bill for it does no harm, perhaps some good. But I will do so reluctantly, for it does little to define the how and why within a strategic approach of a date within a year that we can redeploy from Iraq and leave behind the possibility of an unfailed Iraqi state. We owe such an explanation since it is us by force of law that will end this tragic misadventure.

DEMOCRATS SETTING RECORDS

(Mr. AKIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. AKIN. Americans love to compete and to set records. In fact, people all over the world record their records in the Guinness Book of World Records. But there are some kinds of records called Darwin Awards for foolish behavior where people eliminate themselves by doing something unusual. One man took a pistol and decided to rob a gun store and got shot.

The Democrats are not using a pistol, but they have been setting some records. They have just set one this year, that is, the largest tax increase